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ARCHEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY.

Fort Ancient, Ohio.—(By WARREN K. MOOREHEAD. Cincinnati, O., Robert Clarke & Co.)—This volume of Mr. Moorehead's is a valuable contribution to antiquarian literature. It is confined to the description of this fortification alone.

Fort Ancient is located in central Warren County, Ohio, some forty-two miles northeast of Cincinnati, on the P. C. and St. L. R. R. It lies upon a plateau 269 feet above the Little Miami River, which it overlooks and which flows at its base. The walls forming the enclosure follow the brink of deep ravines. The embankments are mostly of earth, although in places there are great quantities of stone. These rocks comprise flat slabs of limestone and some few pieces of sandstone. A deep ravine, having a slope of thirty-five to thirty-eight degrees, follows the earthwork for nearly a mile and a half on the western and southern sides. The embankment is built directly upon the edge of the ravine, so that the earth used in its construction has rolled down upon the outside. Thus the earth artificially placed can be distinctly traced forty feet from the summit of the earthwork. At the same place the inside measurement of the wall is twelve to fifteen feet.

The accompanying map of the structure will indicate the peculiar features.

In its topographical work, its illustrations, its intelligent description of the excavations, the volume is deserving of large praise.

Mr. Moorehead, with his party, spent the entire summer of 1889 at Fort Ancient, preparing material for the book.

We may differ from Mr. Moorehead in some of his conclusions, yet we cannot but admire the thoroughness with which the structure has been examined, and the completeness of the survey. In this regard it is worthy the imitation of more pretentious parties.

The work is more laudable because Mr. Moorehead was not assisted by any institution or person, but bore the expense of the investigations himself.

The first few chapters of the book deal with the outline of the structure, measurements, etc. Those following describe the stone graves and mounds explored, while the remaining chapters give quotations from some twenty prominent antiquarians upon Fort Ancient, and express the author's conclusions.

The distances of various points of interest have been ascertained with care ; the length of the embankments in the Old and New Forts is 18,712 feet. The length of the crescent in the New Fort is 269 feet ; length of the parallel walls, 2760 feet ; the distance in a straight line between the extreme part of the New Fort to that of the Old is 4993 feet. The average height of embankment is twelve and one half feet. In the highest places (where the walls cross the eastern side of the plateau) it reaches an altitude of twenty-two feet, while in one locality, where scarcely any protection on account of precipitous ravines is necessary, it is but three and one-half feet high.

Two classes of burials were discovered ; the one being made in stone graves, while the other was a simple interment under a small heap of stones. The former order of burial resembles the stone graves of Tennessee. A village site and cemetery similar to that of Madisonville, Ohio, was revealed by excavations in the valley adjacent to the Miami River. Out of this valley were taken a quantity of refuse such as would accumulate from an aboriginal village. The deposits were found at three levels, the deepest being five feet below the surface. As the pottery of the lower deposit was different from that discovered above, Mr. Moorehead is of the opinion that various tribes occupied this region.

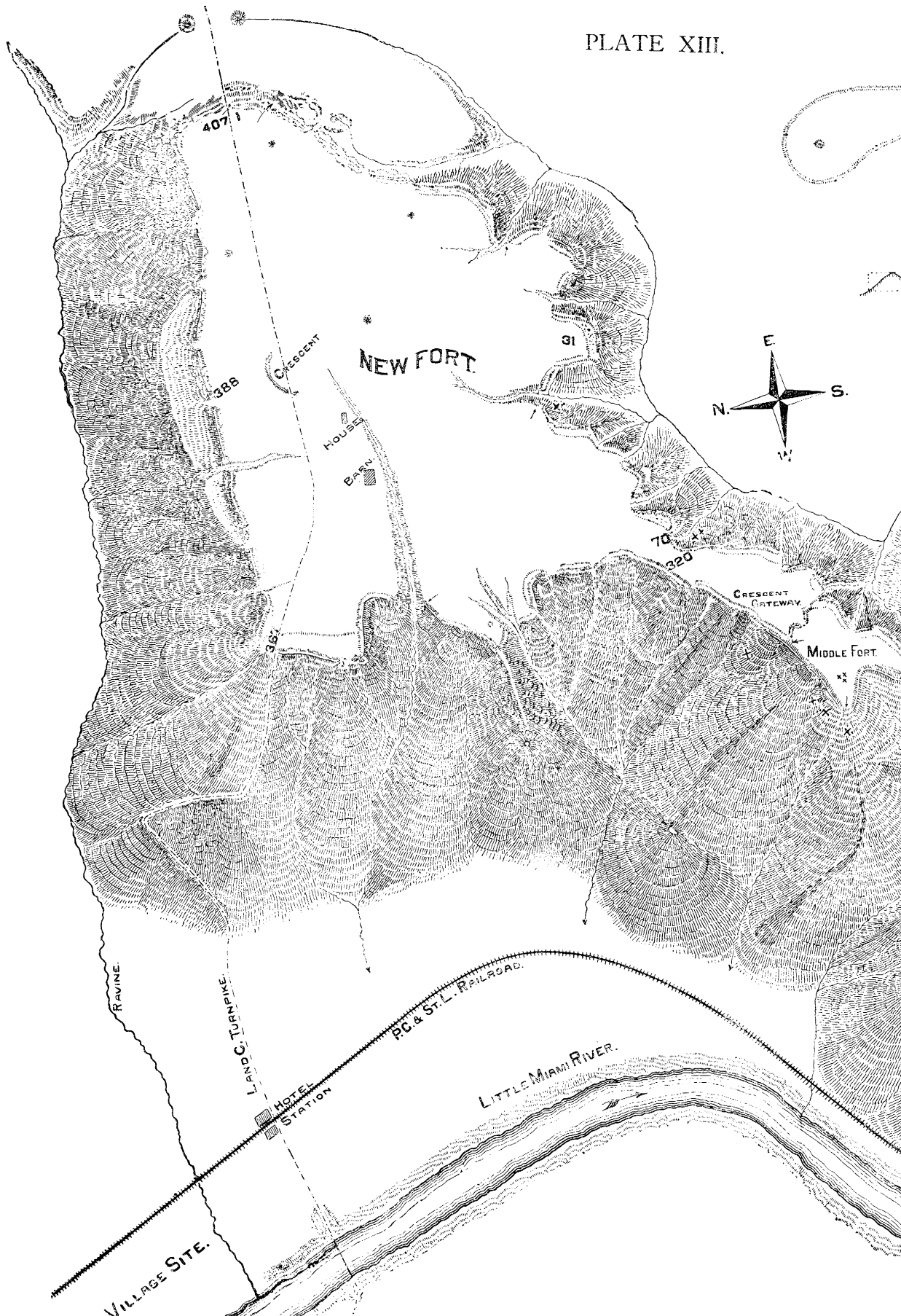
The general conclusions drawn are interesting. He is led to conclude from his examination of the place that the fortification was erected by one people as a defence against a hostile tribe or nation. He thinks that the neighboring Indians living within a radius of one hundred miles were allied and held in common this structure, that a number were constantly detailed to keep it in repair, and that in case of an invasion they congregated here for safety.

Mr. Moorehead gives the following definition of Fort Ancient : "Fort Ancient is a defensive earthwork, used at times as a refuge by some large tribe of Indians ; and at intervals there was a large village situated within the walls."

In the excavations upwards of two hundred skeletons were exhumed, an aboriginal stone pavement 130 by 500 feet discovered, etc. Altogether the work is commendable, and we would feel inclined to criticise but slightly. A ground plan of the fort is given, which is reproduced in the accompanying Plate XIII.—THOMAS WILSON, Smithsonian Institution.

March 15th, 1890.

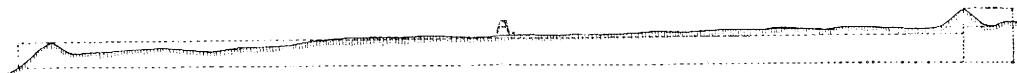
PLATE XIII.



LENGTH. 2760 Ft.

PAVEMENT.

PARALLEL WALLS.



CROSS SECTION S. A. NEW FORT. B. OLD FORT.

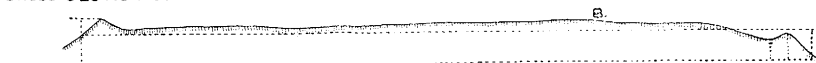


PLATE 2.

MAP OF * FORT ANCIENT

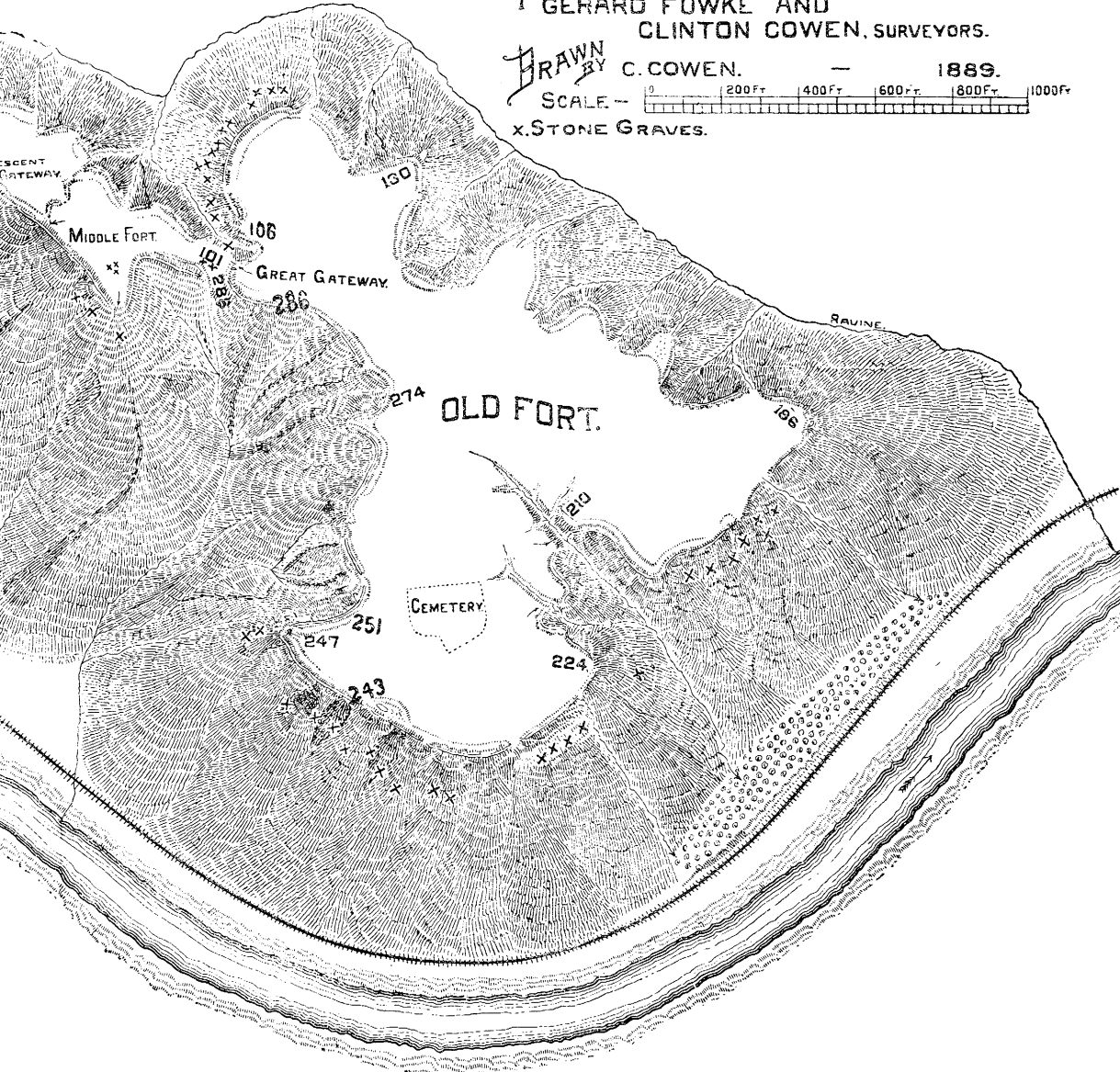
GERARD FOWKE AND
CLINTON COWEN, SURVEYORS.

DRAWN BY C. COWEN.

1889.

SCALE. — 0 200 Ft. 400 Ft. 600 Ft. 800 Ft. 1000 Ft.

X. STONE GRAVES.

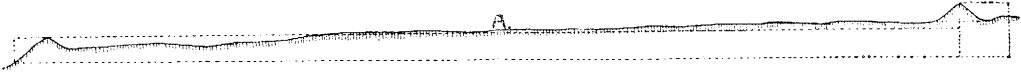




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PAVEMENT.

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CROSS SECTION S. A. NEW FORT. B. OLD FORT.

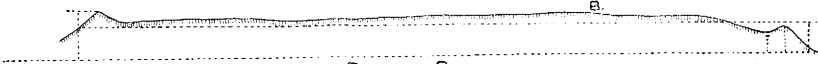


PLATE 2.

MAP OF FORT ANCIENT

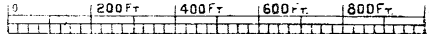
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